221 435 Despite the availability of fish and of vegetables in the canal, the highest cash outlays for family food occurred in this transplanting season. Several factors probably contributed to this: increased food energy needs because of long hours of work, venders again accessible because of high water, cash from sale of last year's crop still in hand, the convenience of cooked foods and snacks, and perhaps the need to replenish household supplies after the long drought, or after their depletion by a ceremony.

221 512 The two months of September and October during which the rice grew afforded some respite. People slept a little longer and breakfast was not prepared so early. The skilled cook might take over and could give more attention to food preparation. All who could, took the opportunity to visit and take trips. A few might go on a pilgrimage. Therefore, in this season, all family members were less often together at the evening meal. Fishing was a continuous occupation, with some preserving and home craft. Jobs such as selling food in the market were undertaken for ready cash; houses and equipment were built or repaired. Finally the threshing floor was prepared.

343 133 High water caused time-consuming inconvenience only in earth-floored cottages where it was necessary to keep the rice stores and chickens dry, move the cook-stove, and either build plank walks or cook standing ankle deep in water.

243 221 By November, the earliest varieties of rice matured. Those who owned several rice fields could put at least one into an early type. Many persons, by then short of rice, were glad to be thus tided over. One grandmother divided her first harvest among her several long-since-independent married children; 2 tangs[1] of milled rice per family, 40 for herself.

The heroic labor of harvest occupied December, January, and February. Farmers raced against the all-too-fast lowering of the water in the canals, without which sheaves could 461 not be moved and buyers could not come for the paddy. People worked all daylight hours in the fields, threshed far into 226 the night. At this time also many varieties of fish matured and men fished night after night. Just when the convenience 434 of purchased food was greatest, cash was exhausted. With 426 rice money in sight, venders might be generous with credit, 443 but they could navigate only the larger canals, so were not available to many.

000 There was an important psychological difference between

504 1. One tang equals 20 liters. Milled rice weighs about 16 kg. per tang.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

CHAPTER II

THE COMMUNITY

Geography

131 The community of Bangchan is situated some twenty road-miles northeast of Bangkok in the heart of the economically all-important commercial rice growing area of central Thailand. Surrounded by their rice fields, the population 361 (161) (503) of about 1,600 persons lives on some three hundred small family homesteads scattered along a half dozen connecting *[243] canals. The community occupies an area of 6,500 rai,[1] or 2,600 acres, all of which, with the exception of about 300 rai of homesites and narrow strips bordering canals, is given over to the production of wet rice.

134 The soil of Bangchan area is heavy dark clay with *243 an impervious layer at a depth of about six to eight inches and is suited only to rice growing.

133 The area is essentially flat, rising slightly toward 312 the north. It receives, in addition to rain water, irrigation water channeled into it through the Saen-saeb Canal one mile to the south, Samwa Canal one mile to the east, and Khlong-song Canal one mile to the north.[2]

• [804] 1. One rai is equal to two-fifths of an acre.

2. See map on page 162.

583 of their adopted daughter, of which some 300 baht went to
535 bedding materials and 5,000 baht to the wedding feast which
435 the bride's parents alone were supposed to give. It should be noted, however, that in this last case the bride's parents received as dowry from the bridegroom's parents 4,000 baht in cash and two baht[9] weight of gold worth about a thousand baht, and they also received from the guests an aggregate customary contribution of 2,360 baht. Thus, the bride's parents came out with a net gain of 1,080 baht plus the gold which was to be given to the bride.

593 While the conventional marriage was somewhat costly especially for the bridegroom's party, the popular marriage by elopement was much less expensive. Our records show that in addition to nominal ceremonial materials of white cloth, candles and incense, the bridegroom had to pay a fine of only a few hundred baht to his wife's parents when the couple came to receive formal forgiveness from them.

We do not have comparative figures for the occurrence of conventional marriage and elopement, but the latter appeared very frequently in our daily field notes as against very few cases of the former.

591 There are two types of establishment of new families
184 after marriage: (a) immediately after marriage, and (b) some years after staying with parents of either party.

It was observed that immediate establishment of new families after marriage was common among couples originating from farm laboring families and families of poor farm operators.

[204]

9. One baht weight is equivalent to fifteen grams.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

APPENDIX A

TERMS USED IN THIS STUDY

Measurement

104 [243]

1. Rough rice or paddy: Grains of rice after they have been threshed but before they have been milled.

2. Milled rice or clean rice: Grains of rice after they have been milled.

804

3. One rai equals two-fifths of an acre.

4. One tang equals twenty litres. It is the standard measurement for both paddy and rice. The weight of one tang of paddy varies from one locality to another. On the average, Bangchan paddy weighs about eleven kilograms per tang. The weight of one tang of milled rice does not vary significantly from place to place, the average being sixteen kilograms.

5. One baht (weight for gold and silver) equals fifteen grams.

436

Currency

The basic monetary unit is the baht. During the period of the study, Thailand maintained a so-called open market exchange rate which served largely as the going and legal rate for all commercial transactions other than exported rice and a few specified items of export and import. At the time of the study, this open market rate was about 20.25 baht to one U. S. dollar.

The official rate of exchange during the early post-war period was 10 baht to one U.S. dollar. Following the